CLAIMS:

We claim:

1.   A method for managing membership in a collaborative computing environment community, the method comprising:

receiving identification of a selected a group of end user persons to invite to join the collaborative computing community;

evaluating the selected group to identify one or more invitees there from;

inviting the one or more identified invitees; and

receiving an indication from one or more invitees that the invitee wishes to join the community.

2.   The method of Claim 1, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are already members of the community, the identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not already members of the community.

3.   The method of Claim 1, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are excluded from the community, the one or more identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not excluded from the community.

4.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising further performing access

control processing to determine whether an invitee who has accepted the invitation to join the community is authorized to join the community.

5.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising removing a group from the community, wherein members of the community who are members of the removed group are not removed as members of the community.

6.   The method of Claim 1, wherein inviting one or more identified invitees includes sending an electronic mail message to each of the identified invitees, the electronic mail message including a hyperlink, which can be selected to indicate a desire to join the community.

7.   The method of Claim 2, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are excluded from the community, the one or more identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not excluded from the community.

8.   A computer-readable storage medium storing a computer program which when executed performs a collaborative computing community invitation method comprising:

receiving identification of a selected a group of end user persons to invite to join

the collaborative computing community;

evaluating the selected group to identify one or more invitees there from;

inviting the one or more identified invitees; and

receiving an indication from one or more invitees that the invitee wishes to join the community.

9.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 8, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are already members of the community, the identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not already members of the community.

10.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 8, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are excluded from the community, the one or more identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not excluded from the community.

11.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 8, wherein the method performed by the stored computer program when executed further includes performing access control processing to determine whether an invitee who has accepted the invitation to join the community is authorized to join the community.

12.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 8, wherein the method performed by the stored computer program when executed further includes removing a

group from the community, wherein members of the community who are members of the removed group are not removed as members of the community.

13.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 8, wherein inviting one or more identified invitees includes sending an electronic mail message to each of the identified invitees, the electronic mail message including a hyperlink, which can be selected to indicate a desire to join the community.

14.   The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 9, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are excluded from the community, the one or more identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not excluded from the community.

15.   A system for managing membership in a networked collaborative computing environment community, the system comprising:

a first workstation; and

a collaborative computing server in data communication with the first workstation via the network, the collaborative computing server being operative to:

receive identification from the first workstation of a selected a group of end user persons to invite to join the collaborative computing community;

evaluate the selected group to identify one or more invitees there from;

send a notification to the one or more invitees extending an invitation to

join the collaborative computing community; and

receive an indication from one or more invitees that the invitee wishes to join the community.

16.   The system of Claim 15, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are already members of the community, the identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not already members of the community.

17.   The system of Claim 15, wherein evaluating the selected group includes determining whether any members of the selected group are excluded from the community, the one or more identified invitees being members of the selected group who are not excluded from the community.

18.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the collaborative computing server is further operative to perform access control processing to determine whether an invitee who has accepted the invitation to join the community is authorized to join the community.

19.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the collaborative computing server is further operative to remove a group from the community, wherein members of the community who are members of the removed group are not removed as members of the community.

20.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the system further comprises one or more second workstations in data communication with the collaborative computing server via the network, and wherein inviting one or more identified invitees includes sending an electronic mail message to the second workstation corresponding to each of the identified invitees, the electronic mail message including a hyperlink, which can be selected to indicate a desire to join the community.